Special Meeting of the Board - Meeting Minutes (In-Camera)

Date: Tuesday February 8, 2022
Time: 7:00pm
Location: Zoom Video Conference

PRESENT:

Mayor Drew Dilkens, Chair
Mayor Aldo DiCarlo, Vice Chair
Councillor Rino Bortolin
Mr. Robert de Verteuil
Ms. Denise Ghanam
Chief Pamela Mizuno
Deputy Chief Frank Providenti
Deputy Chief Jason Bellaire
David Tilley, Provincial Advisor

REGRETS: None

RECORDER: Sarah Sabihuddin, Administrative Director

---

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

2. Declarations of Conflict & Pecuniary Interest by Members

None

3. Approval of Verbal Agenda

Moved by Ms. Denise Ghanam seconded Vice Chair Aldo DiCarlo, to APPROVE the Agenda. CARRIED

4. New Business

4.1 Ambassador Bridge Blockade

Chief Mizuno provided an update to the WPS Board on the recent situation regarding the Ambassador Bridge Blockade. WPS was notified last week of the potential for this protest to take place in Windsor. On Monday WPS received confirmation that this event was proceeding. Deputy Bellaire is overseeing the operations, Superintendent Jason Crowley is the Officer in Charge and Inspector DeGraff is 2nd in Charge.

WPS team has moved into the Fire Station #6 and will be using this space as our operations centre

WPS has requested assistance should we need it from Chatham Police and Lasalle Police. Our top concerns are public safety and de-escalation

Deputy Bellaire: Over the course of the last 24 we have been able to contain physically and have negotiated in good faith to open one lane of traffic North Bound. This worked initially but has since expired. Currently, both North and South lanes are blocked.

There have been a few incidents that have occurred including an interaction at Assumption High School. Police have been able to prevent the use of that property by the protesters.

4 tickets were given overnight and many of the original crew have since departed. The group has been largely agreeable but radical factions do exist in the group.

We are focusing on using our intelligence to negotiate, use diplomacy, mediation and de-escalation tactics at the moment. We will continue to be prepared and use a strategy that is deep in diplomacy.

We have the OPP – Provincial liaison team in Windsor helping.

Ms. Denise Ghanam: How is the moral of the WPS?

Deputy Bellaire: They are all very engaged and doing alright at the moment. However, we want to protect their well-being and have a plan for reserves if needed.

Chief Mizuno: WPS officers are doing a fantastic job. Lessons have been learnt from Ottawa and from our own past experiences and external assistance has been requested.

Councillor Bortolin: With an eye to the future what would the next steps look like to come to a resolution?

Deputy Bellaire: We know that every police action will have a strong reaction. Any escalation has to be calculated. We are using diplomacy and negotiation tactics at the moment as physical escalation will be a last resort. Primary goal is keeping our members and the community safe.

Chief Mizuno: We are trying to chip away by not allowing fires or encampments.

Councillor Bortolin: In terms of resources do we feel that we have enough?

Chief Mizuno: We have had conversations with local police services as well as the OPP and are ready to ask should we need assistance. The amount of assistance we will need will be dictated by what happens in the coming days. However, if WPS does not have what we need we will make requests.

Chair, Mayor Dilkens: In my own conversations I have spoken with our federal partners and they have asked what we need to get through this. The Chief will be making a request for 100 additional officers.

Deputy Bellaire: No options are off the table at this point. If we have an opportunity to take action then we will if it will be advantageous.

Vice Chair, Mayor DiCarlo: Being at the University I am noticing more activity and feelings of uncertainty. Is there a plan to stop allowing people to enter the direct area of the protest?

Deputy Bellaire: At any point we can extend the circle of control. This would be based on the current situation as well as intelligence gathered. We want to be deliberate but also quick and effective.

Ms. Denise Ghanam: Is there anything that you need from the Board at this time?

Chief Mizuno: Not at this moment in time but we will continue to update the Board as things change.

Mr. Robert de Verteuil: In following the events in Ottawa are there any local officers past or present who are supporting the protest?

Deputy Bellaire: No. We have looked into this and there are no individuals associated with this group that are past or present members of the WPS.

Mr. Robert de Verteuil: Have you also looked into social media posts by WPS to ensure that they are following directives related to this situation?

Chief Mizuno: We do have a social media policy in place for those individuals who are representing the Service officially or if they chose to identify as a WPS Member they also have to follow the same directive through self-identifying.

Dave Tilley: Are Chatham and Lasalle already on the ground?

Deputy Bellaire: Tomorrow they should be on the ground and ready to rotate. We do not want to over ask but have balance and have requested an additional 100 officers.

Moved by Ms. Denise Ghanam seconded Vice Chair Aldo DiCarlo, to RECEIVE the update as presented. CARRIED

13. Adjournment

13.1. Next Meeting February 24, 2022

There is no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM

Moved by Vice Chair, Mayor Aldo DiCarlo, seconded Ms. Denise Ghanam to adjourn meeting.

_____

SARAH SABIHUDDIN
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

APPROVED THIS 24 DAY OF FEBRUARY 2022.

_____

MAYOR DREW DILKENS, CHAIR
WINDSOR POLICE SERVICES BOARD